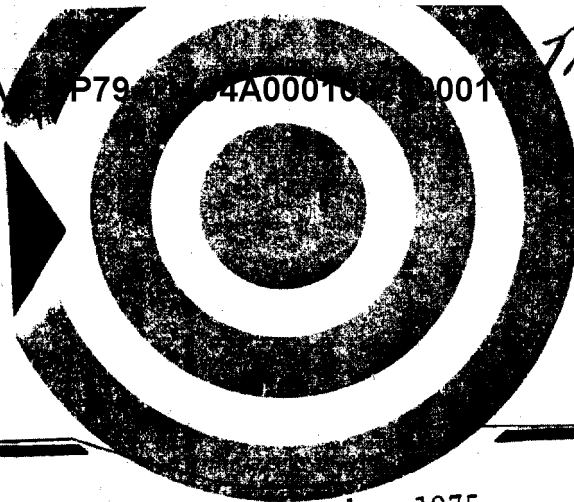


Master

FEATURES



'The Date for Making Two Vietnams into One', The Economist 8 November 1975.
'Hanoi Moving S. Viet Industry to North', Los Angeles Times 9 November 1975.
'Life in South Vietnam Six Months After Liberation', Various Sources. *
'Vietnam Reunification', Bangkok Post 11 November 1975.
'Distribution Shortcomings', Nhan Dan Editorial 5 November 1975.
'Youths Volunteer to Go to New Economic Areas', Radio Hanoi 27 October 1975.

The attached articles are intended to support what we see as our continuing covert action responsibilities regarding Vietnam: to ensure that international opinion makers, while no longer focusing on Vietnam, are kept generally aware of what is happening there as well as in other areas of Indochina now in communist hands. What is happening in Vietnam is that the so-called liberation of the South has turned into an occupation by the North. The Viet Cong, who paraded through Saigon six months ago, are now relegated to routine chores while Northerners--police, militarymen and civilians--occupy all positions of power as well as Saigon's villas.

The occupying forces are concerned with security, control of the population and bringing Southerners to the same level of indoctrination that has existed in the North for years. Physical and passive resistance to the new order continue but not to a degree sufficient to threaten the regime. Personal problems of food shortages and lack of money and jobs are generating human problems which the occupiers so far have been unable to solve. Urbanites are being "induced" to work in "new economic areas"; Southerners, who "lost", are being asked to do with less and Northerners, who "won", are exhorted to continue wartime-level sacrifices.

North-South frictions are being aggravated as Hanoi imposes its system and as the North empties the South of military, factory and consumer items. Hanoi's press and radio occasionally admit there are problems of corruption, favoritism, black marketing and lack of organization in the North and the South. At the same time what we see as fiction is mingled with truth as the same press reports there will be elections aimed at giving the South a voice in a new National Assembly.

* May be paraphrased by media assets for local publication.

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26 November 75

CPYRGHT

The date for making two Vietnams into one

FROM OUR SOUTH-EAST ASIA CORRESPONDENT

Hanoi

If the long-suffering people of North Vietnam were expecting peace to bring about an automatic improvement in their living standards, which are perhaps the lowest in south-east Asia, they were mistaken. The war for which they sacrificed so much was over six months ago. Saigon, which in some ways resembled a giant American PX, has been delivered into communist North Vietnam's hands, yet the lives of most of the northerners still teeter uncomfortably on the bread-line, lacking in all but the bare essentials. So far as your correspondent could tell during a week's visit to North Vietnam as a tourist, virtually none of the luxuries that the people of the south had come to take for granted, and for which many northerners secretly crave, have percolated through.

I saw one car and one Honda from Saigon and two bottles of French champagne, for foreign consumption only. The state-run stores of Hanoi and elsewhere were of the usual disheartening bleakness, and as a tourist there was little more one could buy than left-wing publications and postcards of Ho Chi Minh. The Vietnamese, on an average salary of £10 a month, can rarely afford to engage in anything more daring than window-shopping. When I tried to buy an accordion at Hanoi's main store I was rebuffed with an embarrassed no. The only one in stock was considered too precious to sell.

Obtaining information in Hanoi, where even the lowest officials are inaccessible, is frustratingly difficult. As one diplomat said, Hanoi is like living in the middle of a crossword puzzle: you are constantly trying to evaluate obscure clues. However, the generally accepted explanation of the regime's reluctance to give its people a taste of the good life in reward for their past sacrifices is that it fears that to do so would divert the country from the task of reconstruction. For years North Vietnam's leaders have preached the virtues of austerity. To drop the line now might prove dangerously inconsistent. Cross-border traffic between the two Vietnams was interrupted six weeks after the communist capture of Saigon; the reason given was transportation problems, but it could well have been because the rush to buy Hondas, cars, cameras, radios and electric fans on the Saigon black market was dislocating the north's subsistence economy.

To survive in Hanoi—it is easier for the peasants in the countryside—a worker is almost always compelled to buy on the free market because he is severely rationed in how much he can purchase in the state stores. Under the state system, each member of a family is restricted to 12 feet of cloth a year and a monthly meat ration of 300 grammes; the meat allowance in Saigon, by comparison, has just been fixed at a kilogramme a head. The all-important rice ration ranges from 14 to 22 kilogrammes a month, depending on one's job, but constant shortages (North Vietnam has always been a grain deficit area) invariably mean that as much as half the ration is adulterated with manioc or another substitute crop.

The free market is thus vital to the smooth running of Hanoi. The authorities, worried by its growth, have twice this year mounted campaigns to close it down. They have also tried to stamp out the black market which survives beneath the surface, furnishing antiques to foreign diplomats and illicit luxuries to senior officials. Both campaigns failed. The black market went into hibernation, and free-market vendors simply moved their pavement stalls to another part of town, hiding those items which they were forbidden to sell, and waiting for the heat to die away.

The authorities have been equally frustrated in their attempts to stamp out bureaucratic corruption and nepotism, which are continuing sores—though never reaching the grand scale of Saigon of old. It is a refreshing symptom of the relaxation in attitudes that accompanied the peace that clowns performing at the circus, an important feature of Hanoi life, are able openly to denounce such malpractices in their skits, and be loudly applauded for doing so. The boringness of official uniformity is counterbalanced by the good humour of ordinary North Vietnamese who, at home at least, do not project the image of being the "Prussians of Asia", as some American generals used to call them.

Foreigners are besieged with smiles, though often because they are assumed to be Russians. The hordes of soldiers one sees—this is surely one of the most over-armed countries in the world—carry no arms. There is a curious absence of policemen in the streets, presumably because 20 years of communist rule have created the type of

society that polices itself. There is no sign of internal oppression, although our guide was evasive when asked about the purpose of the big prison near the centre of Hanoi, perhaps because he did not wish to admit that the regime has not created the perfect man. Other taboo subjects are abortion, which is on demand (the husband's permission is not required), and poverty.

Our tour group was steered away from the seedier parts of town, where it is still possible to find people sleeping on the pavements. This explodes the myth that the North Vietnamese have eliminated poverty, just as the locked doors of Hanoi cathedral destroy the pretence that Catholics are free to practise their faith. It was clear from this, and from conversations in Hanoi, that Catholics and Buddhists both have their religion held against them.

The widely-held view that the Hanoi-Haiphong area was devastated by American bombs is also illusory. Looking around the unscarred countryside one could be excused for thinking that this part of North Vietnam at least had never been at war. Only a few signs remain: Kham Thien, the badly bombed street near Hanoi's railway station, with its statue of a woman who died on December 13, 1972, while feeding her baby; the coal town at Hon Gai with its blackened shells of houses; a bridge near Haiphong built out of missile casings. Here, unlike the south, you can go for weeks without seeing a disabled war veteran. It is understood that the government has confined the disabled to special centres in the countryside where they can be looked after—without becoming a demoralising influence on the rest of the population.

The chief topic of conversation in Hanoi, among diplomats and senior officials alike, is the political reunification of Vietnam. The earliest convenient date is probably just before the Communist party congress, which is expected to be held in February or March. Many skilled cadres have been sent south to prepare the way, and western embassies have been informally advised that they will soon be able to set up consulates, but not embassies, in Saigon. In case there are any lingering doubts as to who will rule the unified Vietnam, the city is full of maps with Hanoi marked as the capital.

Hasty reunification will not be without its dangers. The economies and aspirations of the peoples of the north and south differ widely; combining them rapidly could dislocate the decision-making apparatus and delay the reconstruction of both parts. There are many people in the south who are going to resent even routine decisions being taken in Hanoi. Yet this, it seems, is what is intended.

CPYRGHT

The North Vietnamese feel strongly that but for a century of foreign interference Vietnam would be another Japan. Its people, they say, are as industrious and inventive, and—unlike the Japanese—they have the raw materials. But the country as a whole is unlikely to achieve agricultural self-sufficiency before 1977 and with the war over it can no longer count on obtaining substantial free aid. China, for example, has recently signed a one-year aid agreement which will, for the first time, have to be repaid.

The Russians, dominant in Hanoi, are prepared to be more generous than the Chinese. But, aware of the dangers of relying too heavily on Moscow, North

Vietnam is also putting out feelers to the west. The Swedes are to build a children's hospital and a paper mill; the Japanese provide credits and explore for offshore oil. One reason for North Vietnam's caution is that it fears it may have to make embarrassing concessions to the Soviet Union in return for economic aid. Cam Ranh Bay, the former American naval base in South Vietnam, is a case in point. The Russians are said to want to establish a base there, but this is fiercely denied in Hanoi. The official line is that to give a foreign power a base on Vietnamese soil is inconceivable after a century of struggle to rid the country of foreign domination.

CPYRGHT

FACTORIES BROUGHT BY U.S.

CPYRGHT

Hanoi Moving S. Viet Industry to North

BY KEYES BEECH
The Chicago Daily News

HONG KONG—North Vietnam has apparently decided to help itself to some of the economic wealth it inherited with the conquest of South Vietnam.

As a result, according to usually reliable sources, entire factories are being dismantled and shipped from South to North Vietnam.

What seems to have happened is that the North Vietnamese conquerors discovered their half of Vietnam was a backward country compared with the more developed south, the beneficiary of lavish American spending for more than two decades.

"We still feel great hatred toward the Americans for all the suffering and destruction they inflicted on our country," Huynh Van Tam, leader of the Communist regime's trade union

movement, recently told leftist Australian journalist Wilfred Burchett. "But we must admit they left a great amount of industrial property behind."

This was something of an understatement. More important than the staggering American military loot they acquired, the Communists inherited intact an estimated \$12 billion in the form of industrial plants and the infrastructure to serve them.

This was the U.S. investment that was to have made an independent non-Communist South Vietnam economically self-reliant once the war ended.

Apparently feeling that Saigon could spare a little of its booty, especially after years of hardship and spartan living in the North, Hanoi has dismantled and shipped to North Vietnam one of the south's most modern textile plants.

Hospital equipment, another Amer-

ican legacy, has also been shipped north. According to recent arrivals from Saigon, South Vietnamese specialists went north along with the equipment.

Hanoi has also appropriated a monosodium glutamate (chemical seasoning) plant and moved it north.

Visitors to Hanoi say that some equipment of Foremost Milk, the American dairy products company which had an extensive operation in South Vietnam, has turned up in the North.

Also much in evidence in the North Vietnamese capital are American cars, including Ford Falcons and Mustangs, left behind in Saigon.

One American official who left Saigon in a hurry April 29 still groans when he thinks about the brand-new \$5,000 Volvo he left behind.

"It didn't even have 30 miles on it," he says mournfully.

LIFE IN SOUTH VIETNAM SIX MONTHS AFTER LIBERATION

A summary of reports from (20-30) individuals who managed to escape from Vietnam during September and October 1975.

SUMMARY: During the six months since Saigon fell, the "liberation" of South Vietnam has devolved into an occupation by the North, characterized by food shortages, unemployment, indoctrination classes, wholesale shipment of civilian commodities to the North, a virtual standstill in schools at all levels, the presence of NVA and police from the North, the absence of VC, a psychological program to cow the population and the introduction of "new economic areas" to which city dwellers are urged to go a la the PRC's "Hsai Fang" movement.

South Vietnamese, rich, poor and middle-class, have been homogenized into a have-not society by communist authorities who carefully limited each individual to 200 Dong when new currency was introduced. The result is that the average family has little or no money to buy the necessities of life, even when commodities are available. Recent departees again and again recount the predicament of Southerners who have anything to sell, sitting on the sidewalk in front of their homes trying to sell it in order to be able to buy food. Meat in Saigon is scarce and out of reach for most Dong-poor people. Authorities are telling the populace they don't need to eat meat, that all the necessary nutrients are found in vegetables and vegetables can be grown free in the backyard. A missionary from Danang stated that the usual meal consists of rice and the cheapest kind of leafy vegetable. People call the latter "revolutionary vegetables" and the NVA are known as the "revolutionary vegetable people". One group of Vietnamese (including a reporter, a student and militarymen) who escaped in a boat reported that only when one is really starving will the authorities, after conducting an investigation, provide assistance but this is seldom sufficient for survival.

Occupation authorities have promulgated the concept of "new economic areas". These generally are zones emptied of people because of the fighting and are not choice farm land. Youth and the unemployed in cities are urged to volunteer to work in the new economic areas. Motivation is heightened by the fact that authorities are deliberately following a policy of making life in the cities so difficult that people will volunteer to go to the countryside to work. All sources predict that mounting pressures, financial and psychological, will force more people into these areas. In exchange for their labor, they receive shelter and rice to eat, which is incentive enough for people with no prospect of jobs or incomes in the cities. Most recent departees are convinced the new economic areas are there to stay and Southerners debate whether or not it is better to go now, to areas close to the cities, before these areas are full and one is sent later to remote regions of the delta, the border or the highlands.

According to a university student, all universities in South Vietnam remain closed. Students are gone, sent to the countryside to do physical labor. A priest reports that the University of Dalat has been converted into an NVA military barracks. High schools also are closed. Elementary schools were supposed to have re-opened in mid-October but are still semi-functioning. The parallel with China, when schools were closed during the Cultural Revolution, is striking. After the fact, the Northern occupiers of the South, like the Chinese, don't know what to do with the schools. There is no new curriculum, many books were destroyed, no one knows what to teach, so those few students who do assemble spend a lot of time learning revolutionary songs, sweeping the streets and watching revolutionary films imported from the North.

South Vietnamese who have registered are subjected to varying degrees of "re-education". Former enlisted men in Saigon have been given a three-day indoctrination near their homes, issued certificates which they must carry at all times and put on notice they may be called back. Former ARVN officers invariably are sent away for longer indoctrination which varies according to authorities' assessment of so-called crimes. Some officers have been sent to Thu Duc, near Saigon, some to a school about 30 kilometers from Dalat. Other officers were sent to more distant points, many of them not yet returned. It has been reported that high ranking officers are doing physical labor and some are assigned to clear mine fields. Civilians are subjected to block study sessions, and educated people may be sent to remote places separate from the military.

The North Vietnamese most commonly seen in the South consist of NVA bo doi (cadre) or foot soldiers, police and civilian officials. Virtually all military men in the south are NVA. A long time resident of Saigon, a foreigner, observed that of the three ministries he visited regularly, all the top officials were North Vietnamese. The Northerners have been billeted in private quarters, some of them occupying sumptuous villas along main thoroughfares. Some are assigned to occupied houses. The VC, who marched into Saigon on 30 April carrying their AK-47's, were soon put to work directing traffic. When new police were brought down from the North in khaki-orange uniforms, the VC were placed in party precincts to perform various tasks. VC southerners are now rarely seen, almost as though they were being phased out.

South Vietnamese working in harbor areas of Saigon or living along Route 1 to the North reported seeing huge quantities of guns and munitions as well as civilian goods being removed from the South. Specific reports of goods and equipment taken include huge cranes, air conditioners, automobiles, scooters, motor bikes, refrigerators, television sets and the like. Trucks are routed through Danang where they are either diverted to Laos or loaded aboard ships for HaiPhong.

Most recent departees report that fear is mounting in the cities. Because authorities control the news, no one knows what is really happening and the wildest rumors are accepted as the truth.

POST EDITORIAL DISCUSSES VIETNAM REUNIFICATION

BANGKOK POST IN ENGLISH 11 NOVEMBER 1975

It (reunification) will combine the aggressiveness of the North Vietnamese character with the versatility of the South Vietnamese. However, it appears that the North Vietnamese will run almost the whole show. The national election set out in the proposals may provide for fair representation for the South Vietnamese in the new government, but they will have no choice but to accept communism in their daily lives...The South Vietnamese now have to conform. It is reported that there are pockets of resistance in various parts of South Vietnam. It is inevitable that this be the case since most people cannot be forced to change their attitudes overnight. Allegations of bloodbaths have still to be substantiated, but the communists do not tolerate opposition and deviation.

Those who believed the propaganda that the war in South Vietnam was a civil war should be able to see very clearly now that it was a war carried out by North Vietnam to bring South Vietnam under its political and ideological control. It is always too late when we see the facts. Now we have to live with the situation.

NHAN DAN EDITORIAL ON DISTRIBUTION SHORTCOMINGS, 5 November editorial, also broadcast by Hanoi radio in Vietnamese to Vietnam 2300 GMT 4 November 1975.

(Text) With a view to accelerating the labor productivity emulation movement, Resolution No. 46/CP of the Council of Ministers and the Presidium of the Vietnam General Federation of Trade Unions has prescribed the following: The trade union federations in provinces and cities must organize the masses to control and supervise the distribution of grain, food, and other consumer goods. Implementing this policy, Hanoi, Haiphong, Bac Thai, Nghe An, Nam Ha, Ha Tinh, Hai Hung, Thanh Hoa, Hoa Binh, Vinh Phu, Tuyen Quang, Lang Son and Nghia Lo have set up 166 masses' control cells, composed of more than 760 workers and cadres, which control more than 430 grain and food stores, restaurants, handicraft product stores, pharmaceutical product stores, warehouses and a number of food processing enterprises.

Although this control has been exercised only in a number of localities and restricted to a number of items, the activities of the control cells have achieved initial, realistic results in serving the consumers' interests... However, there still remain many stores which take short-run measures, distribute goods irresponsibly, are corrupt, engage in illicit business or sell poor quality goods and unhygienic foods...The practice of selling goods in sympathy or with respect for certain customers, engaging in illicit business, reserving goods for friends, keeping good quality goods and selling poor quality goods to customers has been reduced compared with the past.

YOUTHS VOLUNTEER TO GO TO NEW ECONOMIC CENTERS

HANOI IN VIETNAMESE TO VIETNAM 1430 GMT 27 OCTOBER 1975

(Partial text) Reports from Ho Chi Minh City say that responding to the PRGRSV'S policy, recently thousands of youths in the city have volunteered to go to new economic areas to help our compatriots rapidly resettle and engage in production. In the new economic areas of Tay Ninh, Tan Phu, Kien Tuong, Ba Ria, Long Khanh and so forth, the brothers and sisters have helped our compatriots build houses, dig wells and weed the land.